

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY
An Adlerian Perspective

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED

IN 1989

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF THEOLOGY

THE THESIS

This thesis began by reflecting on the experience of contemporary life – on my experience in life in particular. In my reflection it occurred to me that philosophical thinking was gradually being replaced by psychological thinking. In 1991, while on sabbatical in Dublin, Ireland at the Marianella Pastoral Centre operated by the Redemptorist Fathers, which unfortunately has since closed its doors, my earlier suspicions were confirmed. During the time I spent there my philosophical and theological thinking underwent a process of becoming more critical and, as a result, became more helpful to me.

Through this critical and helpful fine turning, as it were, I came to realize that the relationship between culture and belief was undergoing a re-assessment by philosophers and theologians as the Newtonian understanding of the universe and its derivatives were being replaced by dialectical notions less dependent fixed on traditional philosophical concepts. To me it was becoming clear that psychology was gradually replacing philosophy and this led me to appreciate a new intellectual approach in the interpretation of Catholic theological concepts. Pastoral psychology, as it came to be called, had taken a lead in establishing a point of view which I subsequently appropriated in considering the virtues of faith, hope and charity in the light of Adlerian principles.

I concluded that faith, from an Adlerian perspective may be understood as a pastoral theological attitude arising out of an innate disposition described by Alfred Adler as social interest; *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*. Faith, traditionally considered as capable of “moving mountains” may now be understood as a creative power exercised by healthy individuals living in community. Similarly, hope finds its realization, not in a future idealized world, but in one’s present existence of a higher social interest cultivated on the part of the individual. Following Adler’s insights, charity being out-ward directed strengthens co-operation and reduces competition among individuals living in community.

I present this thesis now for publication without change or alteration to the original. The thesis was accepted in 1989 by Somerset University, Ilminster, UK,

although minor emendations have been effected and typographical errors in the original have been corrected. My decision to publish it with Lambert Academic Publishing, was motivated by the fact that I believe that the topic remains of interest to academics, psychologists, clergy and pastoral assistants.

In the thesis I preserve the distinction between psychology and theology which is often not the case in the contemporary written practice of both disciplines. In North America, it seems, the practice of clinical psychology frequently passes as the practice of pastoral care thus shifting the focus from the health of the soul to the health of the psyche. This shift also reflects a move from classical idealist philosophy to existential philosophy and it is still taking place.

In 1989, when I wrote this thesis, I was pastor in a small town in Northwestern Ontario, Canada. My pastoral duties were such that I had the time to undertake independent distance education before the internet became a popular and effective way to study. This thesis represents my initial attempt in formally integrating the ideas of the classical school of philosophical thought, in which I was educated, into an existential philosophical school of thought. I attempted to put into practice what I had learned in my philosophical undergraduate years and subsequently in my basic theological degree. Even though written a few years ago this thesis, to my mind, still has something relevant to offer to anyone interested the relationship between Adlerian psychology and the spiritual virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity.

Later in my career the thesis served as a basis for a book in 2003 entitled, *Faith, Hope and Charity as Character Traits in Adler's Individual Psychology: With related Essays in Spirituality and Phenomenology*. By this time, (five years later), my thinking had developed and took on a greater appreciation for phenomenology. In 2003 I had made the acquaintance of Sheldon Nicholl, who had just graduated with a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. He agreed to be the co-author of this book which included additional material written in conjunction with Erik Mansager whose doctorate in the psychology of religion had been obtained from the Catholic University of Leuven.

In Part One of the book Sheldon Nicholl offers an outline of Adler's life and the basics of his Individual Psychology. In my contribution I examine the relationship between Individual Psychology and Pastoral Theology. We give special attention to the role of cognitive therapy as the cardinal virtues of faith, hope and charity are explored, in some detail. As character traits they are found to be in accord with the development of Adler's notion of *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*. Part Two of the book is a compilation of previously published essays in American and British journals. One section consists of a set of six exchanges between Erik Mansager and me over the concept of "critical collaboration." Essays that I have published elsewhere on Adlerian themes are included here as well. However, chapter eight is not specifically Adlerian in content. Since the root of Adler's Individual Psychology is anchored in German philosophical thought of the early 1900's this chapter explores notions derived from the later Heidegger and the thought of Husserl.

Finally, for those readers interested in continuing to read about my publishing career, I suggest the two books below written with the aid of a co-author. They represent interests that continue to hold my attention to this day.

First, *Reflections on the Interior Life: Critical Insights from William Gladstone and George Tyrrell* was written in 2006. I wrote this book with George Drazenovich who was then working in community-based mental health services and was studying for his post-graduate degree in theology specializing in spirituality and mental health. He had has his work published in a variety of professional psychiatric and theological journals. In our book we do not distinguish who wrote what passages. Rather, we integrated our thoughts and presented the text as one author. The book's description reads:

This book discusses the thought of William Gladstone and George Tyrrell as existential thinkers. Neither claimed that his views were entirely new and neither represents a system of philosophy. Neither is agnostic or atheist in understanding the spiritual life but each writes as a committed Christian. Both share insights and philosophical perspectives similar to other Christian existential thinkers such as Søren Kierkegaard (Danish Lutheran),

Nicolas Berdyaev (Russian Orthodox), and Gabriel Marcel (Roman Catholic) all of whom stand united in their opposition to the excessive objective and systematizing tendencies that began with Descartes and culminated with Hegel. In their writings Gladstone and Tyrrell worked at replacing a concentration on the objective world with an emphasis on the person as centre of their religious thought. Most classical philosophers have sought to show the connection between faith and reason through a scholastic approach. In an innovative move, existentialist philosophers turned away from the objective world to the being of the individual person. In some non-objective way we must re-live another's experience and project ourselves into another's being for true spiritual knowledge. Our knowledge of physical objects is through appearance, but in understanding a person in a spiritual sense an authentic meeting between an "I" and "thou" and, "Thou" takes place. In such a meeting, humanity continues its attempts at forming right relations in the contemporary world as Gladstone and Tyrrell have shown in a Christian context. Reading the works of William Gladstone and George Tyrrell may constitute for the reader an existential relationship in the inner life of the Christian that can enhance one's theological education.

Secondly, *The Catholic Faith and the Social Construction of Religion: With Particular Attention to the Québec Experience*, was written in 2011 with Peter Stuart, a free-lance writer on Canadian social issues particularly significant to Québec. The book's description reads:

The intent behind this book is to provide grist for the mill for research students and other interested readers. In Chapter One, I present an understanding of the social construction of religious activity, which maintains that social construction of religion arises from a dialectical engagement within the world from a phenomenological philosophical point of view. Peter Stuart presents a classical and traditional point of view, and readers expecting academic accord between us will be disappointed. A

further rationale for writing this book is that both Peter and I desire to express our personal convictions in the public forum. We both have interests in the ebb and flow of civilization, especially as it pertains to the place of faith, religion, politics, and a variety of social phenomena, including economics, culture, gender, ethnicity, and the family, as well as the ebb and flow of money, power, property, and prestige, as articulated throughout history. We believe that writing about the place of faith and religion in French Canada is crucial if one is to understand the place that this 'keystone' civilization occupies within confederation and its enduring ambivalence regarding this civilization's belonging to Canada, or not.

Québec City
January 2013



Somerset University

Administrative Center (UK)
Diton Street, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0BQ
Telephone: (0460) 57255 Fax: (0460) 52195

CERTIFICATE OF VALIDATION AND COURSE TRANSCRIPT

Name: Allan Maurice Savage

Date of Birth: 11 October 1946

Basis of Admission; Cumulative transcripts from:
University of Toronto BA degree 1974
St Paul University, Ottawa BTh degree 1978
Ottawa University, BTh degree 1978
Heythrop College, Diploma in Pastoral Theology 1978

Admitted to School of Theology 18th May 1988 to pursue a course of graduate study.

Degree Course: Master of Theology

Method: Independent Research

Subject: Faith Hope and Charity: An Adlerian Perspective

Draft submission of dissertation proposals approved by supervisor(s) February 1989

Final text of dissertation submitted and accepted by assessment panel August 1989

Degree of **Master of Theology, MTh**, conferred by University Senate 17th August 1989



.....*D A Gunnell*.....
D A Gunnell (Registrar)
30 October 1989
Date

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When we enlarge our outlook and ask what has happened to those forms of life that have chosen a faulty goal of perfection, failing in active adaptation because they have followed the wrong path, and missing the path of universal progress, we find our answer in the extinction of species, races, tribes, families, and thousands of individual persons that have left no trace behind them. They teach us how necessary it is for every person to find a goal that is even tolerably right.

Alfred Adler

PSALM ONE

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day
and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruits in season,
and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does he prospers. The wicked are
not so,
but are like the chaff that the wind drives away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand
in the judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the
LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will
perish.

By the end of this work I would hope that the reader would agree that Adler and the writer of the psalm, - even though separated by time, culture and history, - have each recognized a perennial truth potentially enriching for us all.

PREFACE

It is generally accepted that critical thinking arises out of experience, but in our day many have uncritically accepted principles and values from previous generations without sufficiently allowing for our experience to modify their application. This has resulted in a certain uselessness, perceived on the part of individuals, of values and goals received from previous generations. Today, something called “grass roots” theology is being undertaken in many quarters. By that I mean a type of theological thinking that arises out of one’s experience in life. There is a tendency in human thought for acts or actions of an individual to be based on the movement of thought from principle to application. And this principle is very often verified by reason. Whereas, in “grass roots” theology, one moves from experience to reflection, then follows a statement of principle.

I have sensed such current critical thinking within a pastoral context. This has motivated me to undertake an investigation, from a pastoral perspective, into the relationship between the theological virtues and Alfred Adler’s thought. Dissatisfaction with philosophical thought as a basis for pastoral theology also prompted me to seek for something suitable in articulating my experience. This basis I believe to be psychology. In the introduction to “Faith, Hope and Charity: An Adlerian Perspective,” I have attempted an explanation of how I understand this shift from philosophy to psychology as a tool in current theological thought. This shift takes place most evidently in pastoral theology as opposed to speculative theology. Speculative theology will undoubtedly employ classical philosophical thought for some years to come.

I elected to concentrate on the theological virtues because of their perennial influence in our lives. They are common to all human kind. Although their expression varies from culture to culture, this does not prevent one from abstracting what is common to the human experience within a psychological perspective. Christian and non-believer alike articulate, in some form, the values recognized as faith, hope and charity. Alfred Adler was selected as an exponent of a school of psychological thought that can be effectively incorporated into practice in modern Christian ministry, as well as applied by anyone desiring the common good or betterment of the person. Adler’s

contribution to practical theology is identified as Individual Psychology, which attempts to enable the individual to achieve a fulfilled and integrated life within a community context. This is accomplished by setting appropriate goals and attaining them. Also, scriptural teaching has the same purpose. The welfare of the individual in community has been the concern of Jewish and Christian thinkers all through recorded history. Not exclusively so, however, since other religious traditions have a history of similar concern. My purpose is to focus on what is common in human experience and relate it to the notions of faith, hope and charity, primarily addressed within a Christian context.

To illustrate this modern critical thinking at work I compare and contrast the relationship between two sets of values or ideas. Faith, hope and charity, which are treasured within the Christian tradition and the set of notions expounded by Adlerian psychology, are examined for their similarities and differences. The focus is the individual, in which these notions are centered and lived out. The individual is considered as he lives in community and this allows a practical, pastoral expression of faith, hope and charity influenced by Individual Psychology.

Ministers, counselors and anyone interested in furthering his knowledge of the Christian faith, from a critical perspective could benefit from inquiring into Adlerian thought. In my view it is incumbent upon the Christian to practice his faith in his environment. We live in a pluralistic setting and all knowledge cannot be summed up from one perspective. Whereas the past consideration of issues that occupied theologians were philosophically expressed, today we must seek outside that discipline and allow other modes of thought to influence our thinking. I believe that Alfred Adler has pointed the way in this direction. His psychological insight being compatible with Christian understanding is a good point of departure for modern thought to re-assess itself with respect to the Christian life.

INTRODUCTION

Anyone familiar with current theological or religious thinking will recognize that the Churches are reflecting upon themselves in the modern world. Habits of thought, practice and belief which were fruitful in the past are no longer experienced as relevant today. This is a healthy process. In keeping with the general thrust of all living communities to strive and develop to meet the needs of current conditions, Christians need to reflect upon contemporary experience and adjust their behaviour accordingly. This is growth, this is development. This assessment needs to occur both on a collective and individual basis. As a result of this we can expect that, of necessity, some pain and frustration will be part of the process. But is this not the case as we individually leave childhood to enter adolescence, and leave adolescence to enter adulthood? It is a bitter-sweet realization for most individuals who must make this adjustment. Not all realization comes with a crisis. Indeed, some individuals experience this discovery, of a satisfactory past becoming less satisfactory, as part of the normal process of maturing and growing in the world. This is a psychological phenomenon, common to all individuals, which is experienced consciously to varying degrees. Whether Jew, Muslim or Christian, psychological development is part of human nature.

What I propose to discuss in the following pages is not meant to be an historical criticism or assessment of the virtues of faith, hope or charity in the Christian's life. Rather, I invite the reader to assess my comments and perspectives and decide to what degree what I say here coincides with his own experience and thinking. The reader's life experience will play a part in the value of this work to him. I do not reckon comments and statements in this work as definitive or beyond reform. Good psychology is always in the state of flux as it adapts to the needs of individuals in the concrete situation. Freud, in his day was more accurate in his assessment, than his writings reflect today because the social interaction of individuals has changed. The context alters the assessment. In this investigation I will consider the relationship between belief and culture. This issue has been addressed in many circles since the turn of the century and current investigations are contributing fresh insights into the effect of culture upon belief and belief upon culture. We have, as human agents, the capacity to

determine what we will become. The future is literally in our hands as we make decisions that shape our environment which in turn shapes us. With this realization comes a radical new world vision, which abandons the world of Newton, a fixed system, and opens for us an undetermined future to be fashioned. Religiously and culturally, mankind is obliged to respond to this openness as part of his very nature. Past generations, in so far as they were able, addressed the circumstances of their day to the best of their ability, seeking to fulfill their needs. Their legacy is not false. Rather it is inadequate for us, given our modern concerns and circumstances. Building on the past will require alterations for the future. Theological thinking requires that past perspectives be reinterpreted in the light of contemporary experience. This in turn necessitates a consideration of faith and culture.

An old adage, within theological thinking, is that “grace builds upon nature”. Today, we may express a variation of that theme as “grace respects psychology”. Philosophy and classical thought sought to articulate understanding between the secular world and divine revelation. That same process is at work today only the tools of the exercise are not theology and grace but psychology and grace. Psychology and grace are terms which represent a change, a development and enrichment, rooted within Christian philosophy and theology. These latter came into being when Christendom was at its height of influence in the Western world and a certain privileged relationship between church and state, the sacred and the secular, obtained.

The struggle in modern times, while not denying the contribution of the past, is to account in contemporary terms for this same experience. This is a healthy endeavour. All too often, however, it is addressed as a problematic, a crisis to be overcome or solved in one’s life. From my perspective this struggle is not pathogenic, not a crisis in a clinical sense of the term, but rather part of the normal stages of growth and development that each individual, to some degree, accepts to undertake as part of a normal life. Philosophy will be of little assistance to modern man in the day to day setting of his life. A contemporary discipline and corresponding understanding needs to be adopted as the vehicle to undertake this understanding of self-criticism. Psychology is that discipline. Historical Christianity, and indeed past society in general, often

perceived as the “traditional” way of doing things, has placed constraints upon individual development. Legal constraints of the civil and ecclesiastical law, social mores, traditional customs are all examples of a type of unfreedom under which an individual has been required to live.

With a lifting of these constraints in civil and ecclesiastical thinking there appears to be a new sense of freedom available to the individual. In fact this is true as an examination of history and social relationships will bear out. But along with the external freedom it is necessary to possess an internal freedom. By internal freedom I mean the ability to understand and execute what is necessary in the life of an individual. Obviously, the ability to do this will be relative to many things from the individual’s temperament to the family and economic situation into which one is born. But regardless of that the pattern of struggle and effort needed to be put forward will be the same for all concerned.

I suggest that an individual will need to be able to freely accept the virtue of faith, the virtue of hope and the virtue of charity to live as fulfilled a life as possible in the modern world. As we in our society lift the constraints of the past and invite individuals to accept responsibility in determining the outcome of their lives, the virtues of faith, hope and charity for the Christian - indeed for anyone - will need to be part of the individual’s psychological and spiritual make-up.

I am writing out of Christian religious experience on which these virtues are predicated -sometimes exclusively and hence erroneously - and it is my intention to explore these virtues in the light of modern psychology. The experience of many believing individuals is that former philosophical models no longer hold credibility as a means of articulating the virtues to modern man.

Writings and treatises on the theological virtues abound. One must define terms to avoid confusion and be clear in thinking. This work is approached from a psychological perspective. The majority of writing on the theological virtues has been within a scholastic tradition. While this has been fruitful and useful in the past, present day thinking is more psychologically orientated than philosophically orientated. And we must alter our thinking accordingly.

Few would contest that a virtue is a habit that makes its possessor good and the work he does good. Traditionally, a theological virtue has been understood as a habit whose immediate object is God - who is also the motive for doing good. Today we can build on this tradition and recognize that, both God and man, can be the proper object of the theological virtues. A proper consideration of this topic, from a psychological perspective, will bring us from a narrow doctrinal community to a broader human and spiritual community.

In the unit on faith I shall be adopting the perspective that faith is an attitude, a disposition and individual adopts vis à vis a perceived truth. Whether this truth is real or apparent makes no difference for our investigation. I am concerned with faith as a response process in an individual. While not denying the aspect of faith as divine gift, (capacity to believe), or faith as a habit, (the mind being disposed to give assent), I shall investigate the virtue with attention to the affective and relational dimension of the act. It is likewise with the virtue of hope. The scholastic distinction of hope as a natural virtue, or theological virtue, I will not strictly preserve. Rather, hope will be addressed from a subjective context of the individual living in a future orientated community. There is an expectation on the part of human individuals that the future holds some form of goodness, of blessedness, that is in fact attainable, although it may be difficult.

Charity will be considered as that emotive feeling with roots outside the individual, and his human condition. Love of fellow man and charity are virtually identical related terms. The scholastics distinguished between natural love and supernatural love (good willed to oneself or fellow man for God's sake), but I shall allow these lines to blur and adopt a subjective rather than objective perspective. The common good and the Kingdom of God are, in fact, psychologically speaking, the same reality. By adopting this attitude towards the theological virtues I am shifting from a philosophical mode of thinking to a psychological method of thought.

I am not the first, nor indeed the last, I suspect, to recognize that classical philosophy is no longer adequate for modern man. William James, in the preface of his work, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, admits the same. This follows upon an attempt he made to show the adequacy of philosophy in satisfying man's religious needs. What

resulted was the realization that psychology was better suited to the task in our time. A re-reading of that book after the major portion of this thesis was completed prompted me to include at this point a brief assessment of some of the conclusions and observations of James' work. Much of the subject matter of his lectures pertains to the topic of this theses. In many ways James has presented ideas and conclusions that are similar to Adler's. Like psychologists today and practicing counselors, James observed that an affective experience is often more powerful than an actual event itself. This is also noted by Adler in his use of a psychological fiction in attempting to help the individual attain a healthy life-style. Whether or not this fiction corresponds to a reality is secondary in Adler's thought. Likewise, James refers to a special reality which is not perceived through our ordinary senses, but perceived 'as if' that reality existed. This notion of 'as if' James discusses from a Kantian perspective, and it is tantamount to Adler's psychological fiction.

In his lectures, James uses two terms which I regard as significant for this thesis. One term is 'mind-cure' and the other is 'faith-state'. A healthy mindedness is necessary for an authentic religious experience. He states in Lectures IV and V that this is described as an optimistic scheme of life. This movement was in the early stages when he wrote, (and James acknowledges his own awareness of this), thus, into what sort of practical system it would develop was then unknown. But he considers the large group of individuals following this positive life attitude worth studying as a psychic group. Finally, he acknowledges that both Catholics and Protestants have sincere exponents in the 'mind-cure' movement who have more in common than they first may realize. 'Faith-state' is a term which James discovered in Professor Leuba's writings. James will accept the definition given by Leuba but will prefer to employ the term, 'state of assurance'. Three characteristics are evident should one attain this state of assurance.

They are difficult to understand by one lacking the experience but James lists them as consequential of this assurance. They are: a) a loss of all worry or anxiety, b) a perception of truths not known before, c) and an apparent change in the objective

appearance of the world. Adler will also recognize these symptoms as indicative of a healthy individual attaining a higher degree of social interest.

Finally, for our purposes, it should be noted that James admits we can achieve union with something greater than ourselves. It is within that union we find great peace. This is not far from Adler's understanding of one of the purposes of religion. Indeed, it is one of the things that religion does best for an individual from Adler's point of view. There are a number of psychological theories advanced today about the person. Some are more suitable than others in investigating the question from a theological point of view. Jung, Freud, Erikson, and others have broken ground here and have given us new insights into psychological and religious activity. In this thesis I will consider the contributions made by Alfred Adler to the understanding of human nature. Specifically, by focusing on the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity as lived realities in an individual's life, I hope to show that Adler's notions can enhance and enrich the Christian understanding of what it means to live in today's context.

The suitability of Adler's thinking on the topic will take up part of the task. This will be followed by a deeper consideration of the virtues individually and I hope to relate the findings of this investigation pastorally to those interested in seeking a fresh insight into traditional truths.

PART ONE

Psychology and Belief

Alfred Adler has introduced a system of psychological thought that stressed the importance of the individual being positively nurtured within his environment. Significantly, the term “inferiority feeling” became associated with Adler but it was often erroneously rendered as “inferiority complex” by others. The purpose of his system, as I recognize it, was to enable those emotionally disabled to become useful and an asset to society. Adler’s system obtains within a holistic and humanistic context which offsets any misunderstanding of an exploitive usefulness an individual may be to society. Adler entered medicine as his first career, but by 1900 he had become interested in psychology. For a period of ten years or so he was associated with Sigmund Freud but as time went on he developed ideas and theories that were not totally compatible with the Freudian school. His final disassociation with Freud led to the establishment of the school of thought known as Individual Psychology. This movement grew and was accepted by psychologists and educators on both sides of the Atlantic leading to various centres of Adlerian research and application of method.

Within Individual Psychology there are basic orientations that are very sympathetic to a Christian perspective on life. They may be briefly summarized as follows: i) all important life problems are social; that is, beset the individual in a social context; ii) the individual is a self-consistent unity in his composition; and iii) health is attained by the individual in a set of harmonious social relationships. These orientations will be explored below with the intention of highlighting Adler’s usefulness to pastoral theology.

Adler did much work with children and much of his theory is related to childhood experiences. In fact, educators pay serious attention to his research and formulate educational programmes accordingly. I am of the opinion that adults can also profit greatly from Adler’s insights. This requires adaptation to the adult experiential situation which is presupposed here. Unfortunately, Adler died unexpectedly, on a

lecture tour in Scotland in 1937, before giving to his theories the full benefit of his genius. Psychology and belief are considered below, and it is within this general context that I explore Adler's contribution to pastoral theology.

It is from within the discipline of pastoral theology that the notion for this work was first conceived. My intent in this project is to investigate the relationship between the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity in the context of the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler. Based on experience and theory, it is my contention that Adler's thought can be usefully applied in pastoral theology to assist growth and health in the individual. In fact, his insights will allow faith, hope and charity to be wholesomely practiced and effectively lived by modern 20th Century man. One's belief and faith are socially and culturally interdependent. Together they constitute religion. Psychology studies religious activity as psychic processes in an individual. Religious activity operates in influencing one's actions and setting one's values and goals. Individuals live and exist in a social context and exercise their belief and faith in that social context. These acts of belief and faith in the individual belong to the religious activity of all regardless of denomination. For the consciously religious individual they are recognized as intrinsic to his nature. Also, humans are individually and collectively religious. L. B. Brown in his studies acknowledges the singular and social nature of religious activity.

Religion is a cultural phenomenon, and a fact of subjective consciousness and individual behaviour. It also belongs to the collective consciousness, and is a social institution. ¹ Within his understanding of the person Alfred Adler acknowledged the subjective experience of the individual in a social context.

The individual sees all his problems from a perspective which is his own creation. Thus, he also sees the environment which trains him with his own self-created perspective which changes its effects upon him for better or worse. ²

Faith provides the object of belief and culture effects the attitude of belief that an individual acquires. I adopt here the classical notion of theologians that faith is an act of commitment of one individual to another. The other's presence is accepted and trusted,

often without concrete evidence, allowing one to grow and develop. An early recorded example of this act of faith is related in Genesis 2:1-9, Abraham's response in faith to God's initiative. However, in a Christian culture we must speak of a Christian faith. In a Christian individual we must speak of a Christian belief. What our culture offers us to believe and the faith attitude we adopt towards life will indicate how healthy we are as individuals and as a society.

Principles developed by Adler in his Individual Psychology can be extended and applied in understanding ourselves in the modern world. Adler adopted the term life-style for this process. Adlerian psychology contains diverse principles and it is difficult to present a systematic body of this thought. However, there are general observations that merit investigating for they will shed light on the human condition and can serve in clarifying our behaviour as religious individuals. Before focusing on Alfred Adler and his Individual Psychology and its subsequent use in pastoral theology I, briefly, will note some similarities between psychology and the discipline of theology.

Theology and psychology have a number of characteristics in common. Firstly, both have exponents who adopt many diverse points of view. We speak of schools of psychology just as we speak of schools of theology. When and under what historical and social conditions an author wrote influence his understanding of the events taking place in his lifetime. Theology has seen fit to alter its position and understanding of its doctrines as new light is shed upon man's knowledge of himself. This developmental aspect characterizes both psychology and theology. In both disciplines the betterment of the individual, singularly and in community, has been the purpose. Adler recognizes this relationship between the two when he writes,

If I am venturing now to maintain the right of Individual Psychology to be accepted as a view of the universe, since I use it for the purpose of explaining the meaning of life, I have excluded all moral and religious conceptions that judge between virtue and vice. I do this although I have been convinced for a long time that both ethics and religion as well as political movements have continually aimed at doing justice to the meaning of life and that they have developed under the pressure of social

feeling, which is an absolute truth.... According to this position every tendency should be reckoned as justified whose direction gives undeniable proof that it is guided by the goal of universal welfare. Every tenet should be held to be wrong if it is opposed to this standpoint or is vitiated by the query of Cain: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' ³

While it is true that originally psychology and theology were not easily integrated and in the minds of many they were in fact at cross purposes much has changed in the present context. Theologians and psychologists are becoming aware of their interdependence. In my own pastoral experience, I have been privileged to know a psychologist, with an active practice, who is studying for her Master of Divinity degree. She recognizes the necessity of sound theological understanding in her work with patients. It is the nature of pastoral theology to have a practical dimension to its application. This distinguishes it from speculative theology. Within the Roman tradition, it was with the Second Vatican Council that pastoral theology began to make great strides in application and development. A living world-wide community like the Catholic Church recognized that there was a need to offer guidance and direction to her members based on a lived 20th Century experience. Indeed, some commentators noted with optimism that the council's purpose was intentionally pastoral, not doctrinal, in its deliberations. Flannery appends this note to his translation of the Council document, *Gaudium et Spes* "The constitution is called 'pastoral' because, while resting on doctrinal principles, it seeks to set forth the relation of the Church to the world and the men of today." ⁴

Theologians were allowed and encouraged, to some degree, to seek in secular studies and disciplines what is positive and supportive of an individual's development and growth as a human being. The purpose of spiritual direction or pastoral psychology, as it is known, is betterment of the individual. On an individual and collective basis the well-being of the person is desired. This is also the purpose of psychology. It is in their praxis that psychology and pastoral theology overlap and in fact are complimentary. What will need to be distinguished is the way in which each assists the individual to a

healthy and fulfilling life. Or, as Adler phrases it, “We approach the problem from a different angle, but the goal is the same - to increase interest in others.”⁵

A Consideration of the history of religions would soon demonstrate that what insights and perspectives religious activity has for an individual are not exclusively a Christian possession. Indeed, all religions, for the psychologist offer some attempt at individual betterment of the person in the context of his life situation. From the many forms of natural religious activity through to the world’s great revealed faiths of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, psychologists recognize the common purpose of the betterment of man. This recognition is a development within the Christian faith which at one time in history speculated theologically that it, and it alone, held the key to mankind’s well-being.

The time will soon be with us when a theologian who attempts to work out his position unaware that he does so as a member of a world society in which other theologians equally intelligent, equally devout, equally moral, are Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and unaware that his readers are likely perhaps to be Buddhists or to have Muslim husbands or Hindu colleagues - such a theologian is as out of date as is one who attempts to construct an intellectual position unaware that Aristotle has thought about the world or that existentialists have raised new orientations, or unaware that the earth is a minor plant in a galaxy that is vast only by terrestrial standards.⁶

Can the practice of the psychologist and pastor be favourably compared? Each seeks to have the individual achieve some degree of harmony in his life. Each seeks to promote the welfare of the individual and the community. Different paths may be sought but there is a common purpose. Often the paths do cross and principles common to the theologians and psychologists are recognized and successfully applied in assisting the individual.

The varying points of view in the schools of theology and psychology testify that rigidity and complacency are to be avoided. Good pastoral theology like good psychology takes risks. Both, by their nature must remain open to valid experience of those who live the life of a pilgrim. It is here in this area, as yet to be fully clarified, that

psychology and theology can best enhance each other. Psychology, being the more recent discipline, can learn much from theology and the spiritual masters of the past. Theology can also profit greatly from psychology's contribution to the understanding of the nature of man. Growth and development are natural to the individual. Whether one be considered psychologically or theologically the individual member of the human race is not a static being. Traditionally in Christian experience this growth is recognized in an activity known as spiritual direction. It may range from a formal systematic investigation of life, following some acknowledged mentor, to being addressed more casually as in the everyday regulation of interpersonal activity encountered in a secular world. A goal is needed in all authentic spiritual direction. That goal is called perfection by classical masters of the spiritual life. Depending upon the tradition followed, there is more than one means to reach perfection. It is possible in this modern time for the word "perfection" to raise some ambiguity in meaning. By perfection is not meant an absence of error or to be without flaw. This is a contemporary use of the word unknown to the spiritual authors of the past. Rather by the term I mean something akin to an optimal condition in life that enables the best in an individual, and by extension, in a society, to come to full fruition. This is a continuous process all through the individual's experience never coming to a final completion in this life. The ascetical theologian, A. Tanquary, in his treatise on the spiritual life expresses perfection as, "the approach toward that end by the development of all one's faculties and the carrying out in practice of all duties, in accordance with the dictates of the natural law as manifested by right reason."⁷ The Christian is a believer. That is, he is an individual who places his faith in God and then governs his life accordingly. This action requires distinctions to be made as the individual assesses the world, his relationship to others, and his life vis à vis the God in whom he believes.

Christian theology has recognized two domains, as it were, over the centuries respecting the individual's spiritual life. One, the world and the other, life in Christ, which is experientially different in the individual of faith. Some form of evaluation is required by the Christian life. This evaluation is not of a moral nature, classifying

things as good or evil in themselves, but rather an attitude that touches upon the quality of life. Speaking of this quality of life Adler says,

When we say it is a feeling, we are certainly justified in doing so. But it is more than a feeling; it is an evaluative attitude toward life (*Lebensform*).... We are not in a position to define it quite unequivocally, but we have found in an English author a phrase which clearly expresses what we could contribute to an explanation: 'To see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, to feel with the heart of another.' For the time being, this seems to me an admissible definition of what we call social feeling.⁸

The believer recognizes that God takes the initiative in any growth and that the believer's part is to respond. This classical and venerable approach has been accepted down the centuries by spiritual masters, both in Old and New Testament times. The spiritual life has its own point of departure according to theologians. There is a curriculum in spiritual growth that obliges both the director and the disciple. Even when the director is God, as initiator of movement in the spiritual life, this process obtains. "In this curriculum two basic things are necessary: first there must be grace and power from God; and second, there must be steadfast co-operation by us with what God is seeking to do in our souls."⁹

Since assessment of God's initiative belongs to speculative theology, which is a discipline in its own right, my subject will be the individual himself which I will consider from the perspective of pastoral theology. Pastoral theology arises directly out of our experience in the world as the believer integrates that experience into his belief in God. Thus, in order to develop our thought within the discipline of pastoral theology in this work I will follow the observation made by Hughson in his study of human destiny; "Let us, then, take God's part for granted, and consider what should be done to secure our own faithfulness."¹⁰ To "secure our own faithfulness" allows the investigation of Adler as a means of developing our spiritual life and health.

One may see in St. Augustine's famous remark the beginnings of a pastoral theology. Reflecting upon his life Augustine recognized that his experiences needed to be reconciled with revelation and that this reconciliation was in fact a dynamic activity.

His experiences included those of a pagan life which he incorporated into his Christian faith, enabling him to express in his Confessions that we are made for God and our hearts are restless until they rest in him. How this restlessness may be satisfied will be a concern in this thesis.

Within Christian investigation of the subject of man's restlessness and subsequent contentment there is a division in thinking. Some authors consider this desire for God to be God-given and not natural to man. It is part of God's initiative to stir up man's belief. Others hold this desire for God is natural to man - believer or otherwise - since it is integral to his natural make up. Indeed, within the animal kingdom, this desire for God is what makes man the human animal. Whether this distinction is correct or not, I leave to speculative theology.

I accept, as an experiential fact, that man is a religious animal and his religiousness needs to be accounted for in his experience of life. Adler's notion of striving for social interest is sufficiently akin to Augustine's restlessness to allow one to recognize a common discovery in the experience of both men.

The high degree of cooperation and social culture which man needs for his very existence demands spontaneous social effort, and the dominant purpose of education is to evoke it. Social interest is not inborn [as a fullfledged entity], but is an innate potentiality which has to be consciously developed.¹¹

This view will locate us properly within the discipline of pastoral theology and allow us to consider the use of psychology as a pastoral tool. The believer will experience a power in life. A power that gives him stability to live life, to overcome obstacles and to achieve good during his time on earth. This power can lead one to health and fullness of life and well-being. The non-believer will also lay claim to a power that he experiences in his life that does much the same. Today we understand many kinds of power. There is physical power, political power, economic power, intellectual power, spiritual and moral power. Which belongs to the Christian? Which belongs to secular man? Are they in fact shared by both? Christianity has understood certain powers as virtues. These powers are nothing less than the virtues that bring about some good, accomplish some

desired end within the development of the person. Some hold they are only God-given. Others recognize them as innate to the human individual. Pastorally, the following definition of power is useful since it is the definition of a virtue. “Power may be defined as the possession of a right, ability and freedom to act with efficiency in some given sphere in relation to a definite objective.”¹² St. Paul speaks of power in the 13th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. Faith, hope and charity are seen as being effective in bringing about growth, development and wellbeing in the individual. Faith brings about a grasp of the truth, hope brings about an enjoyment of security, and charity brings about an overcoming of evil or harm that threatens to destroy or at least debilitate the individual.

An investigation of modern psychology will show that it also attempts much the same. Health and well-being of the individual are of paramount importance since this leads to health and well-being of society as a whole. Since the purpose of the essay is to investigate Adlerian psychology with respect to the virtues of faith, hope and charity, Adler’s notions and insights will be my concern in the balance of the work. In life, the individual has a tendency within himself to strive towards wholeness. As well, individuals have historically understood themselves as bearers of a moral will. Adler recognized a responsibility of an individual to himself and as an individual to a community. Community is what Adler understood as life-style.

Man is more than the result of the forces which scientists investigate and use, more than the product of the holistic metaphysical force which governs the atom, the cell, the plant and animal life. Man bears responsibility; he has a mind which can distinguish between right and wrong.¹³

In attempting to understand why Adler would see the individual and the community in harmonious order as indicative of a healthy life-style, we must remember that he along with others lived through a world war that was the most devastating and barbaric up to his time. He and other thinkers of the time were influenced, due to the severity of the war, to see human co-operation as necessary for survival and health of the human race. In applying his thought to the current time we must remember that

many thinkers, philosophers, theologians and psychologists do not have the same understanding as to what is particularly good for mankind. This in fact makes no difference, however, if one accepts the perspective that plurality is possible. Within this plurality a consensus on health of the individual is achievable via Adlerian psychology.

Adlerian psychology aims at enabling people to fulfil the tasks of work, friendship and love. They should be able to express their personalities freely in these activities, forgetting themselves. Such life is spontaneous and the source of true happiness. It is health.¹⁴

This understanding articulates well with the Christian notion of faith. Faith, too, has a similar object, a goal of health realized between the individual and the community. A faithful individual is a healthy individual, psychologically speaking. It is the goal of social interest that determines the general good of mankind. In fact Adler's principles transcend his own era and can be adapted, with modification, to our situation. Health and well-being are interconnected with faith. Both embody a stance that requires an effort, a risk, an element of the unknown in the human situation. From an Adlerian point of view, to comprehend an individual, understanding of his feelings of inferiority and his goal of superiority, need to be taken into account. The terms inferiority and superiority are not to be understood as pejorative concepts but rather as terms indicating poles of contrast between which an individual strives to overcome obstacles in life. He becomes an integrated individual. Faith engages this relationship as well. It is through faith, an attitude seeking health, that the individual seeks to participate fully in the life of the community. Indeed, Christians often understand their churches and fellowship groups as 'communities of faith'. One's attitude to community reveals one's life-style. From a pastoral point of view I suggest that one's appreciation of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity reveals this life-style. As well, whether one's life is healthy or not, psychologically speaking, could be determined by this same life-style. Life is not static. Psychology looks upon the individual as a dynamic entity. The habit of the past has been to view the good, the perfect, the virtuous as something fixed, an ideal after which to conform. While this is acceptable in some schools of thought, it is not a sufficient approach within theology or psychology today. The static approach is no

doubt due to a persistent reliance on classical Greek thinking typified by Plato and Aristotle. In this realm of thought, reality is considered fixed and unchanging, whereas lived experience is somehow a shadow of reality.

For hellenization introduced into Christianity ideals of immutability, stability and impassibility as perfections that all Christians and Christianity as a whole should strive for, since these were the typical and central perfections of God himself.¹⁵

To envision health as conforming to such an ideal or form is not adequate. The criticism is made that, “The human spirit is only too well accustomed to reduce everything that is in flux to a form, to consider it not as movement but as frozen movement, movement that has become form.”¹⁶ Indeed, Individual Psychology posits that it is in the striving, the effort advanced for improvement that the good is achieved fully in the human context. All goals are imagined to which the individual is orientated. They are conceived of as future goals after which the individual strives to make concrete in the present. Meaning in life varies from individual to individual. The meaning one gives to life may be healthy or unhealthy. This can be recognized from one’s life-style. The experience an individual has, with its accompanying subjective significance, is what gives meaning to life according to Adler. In a healthy individual meaning cannot be private but must be communal by nature. In fact private meaning is no meaning at all in Adlerian thought. The believer’s attempt at incorporating the practice of the virtues into a life-style, must be in a communal context. This thought resonates well with theology - especially Christian theology - which stresses the necessary relationship between the individual and the community. Private meaning is no meaning at all, but as the virtues are experienced individually, they in fact become meanings for the community. They need to be lived out as such. Integrity and health are created within a community of experience and influence. Whether or not others can share in this experience and subsequently accept it as valid, establishes its communal meaning. Up to this point I have been speaking as a Christian. This is not to lay exclusive claim, however, to the truths experienced by Christians as the only valid expression of truth. Christian theologians are increasingly admitting the validity of

religious experience outside the traditional understanding of the institutional Church, the People of God. In addition, to William James who affirms this, Charles Davis, tells of his own discovery of this truth in *A Question of Conscience*. He speaks of the Church as a “zone of truth”. He no longer accepts the Roman Catholic Church as the legitimate representative of the truth. But this, for him does not entail a rejection of the virtues of faith, hope and charity. Other social structures are more conducive for one to experience and live out these virtues. His experience, I am sure, is repeated by members of various Christian denominations in our society today.

In all religious activity the goal is the same - i.e. the salvation of man. This goal may be understood in the Christian sense as redemption from sin or in the humanitarian sense of betterment. In either case the dynamic of faith will be the same. One can recognize this phenomenon as a striving for social interest. Practicing the virtues of faith, hope and charity are part of the religious life-style. As part of the religious life-style they can be articulated through Adler’s principles of the psychological dynamic at work within the individual. Faith, hope and charity as Christian virtues are goals related towards the healthy and salvific life-style of the individual. As Adler phrases it, “In all religions we find this concern for the salvation of man. In all great movements of the world men have been striving to increase social interest, and religion is one of the greatest strivings in this way.”¹⁷

How one interprets and gives meaning to one’s experiences determines the relationship with the world at large. The same can be said of our practice of the virtues. Faith, hope and charity or lack of them convey something of the individual and his life-style. Absence of social interest according to Adler would indicate an unhealthy life-style. Can it even be said a neurotic life-style? It is healthy for an individual to be community orientated and possess a goal of social welfare. Man as a religious organism has a dynamic orientation in life that can be healthily expressed in practicing the theological virtues. The virtuous life-style is community orientated. The Christian, in setting up goals determined by the virtues, will avoid neurotic behaviour and create a healthy environment for himself and others. Incorporation of these virtues into a life plan will advance society. Indeed, one could go even further and claim that the

Christian community can be realized by our practice of these virtues. Human wholeness can be realized in a life-style that is goal orientated. The practicing of these virtues constitutes a life-style that can be satisfactorily encouraged by Adler's notions of man's psychological make-up.

For general guidance I would like to propound the following rule: "...as soon as a goal of a psychic movement or its life-plan has been recognized, then we are to assume that all movements of its constituent parts will coincide with both the goal and the life-plan." ¹⁸ This brings us now to a more detailed consideration of the virtues individually and how they can be understood by modern man in the light of Adler's psychology.

PART TWO

Faith

Within the traditional Christian perspective it is held that God is the only proper object of faith. In fact, all great monotheistic religions have accepted this premise. Unlike belief, which can have an inanimate object for its goal, faith is necessarily expressed in a dynamic order. I am considering here faith as a response to an invitation, a capacity to relate, not as an object or thing given. God is the object of faith in the sense that recognizing him sets up a relationship between two individuals. That relationship is in the dynamic order and has the capacity to grow and develop. On the part of the individual the act of faith proves nothing as to the existence of God. It is a subjective experience that admits of no verifiable investigation in the scientific realm. Yet a faithful person demonstrates an attitude, and life-style that clearly reveals that something is happening. This is an activity that is indicative of growth and development which can often, but not always, be recognized by others. Faith then has a communal dimension. As the faith response in one individual is recognized, at the same time it inspires this same response in others of like disposition. This disposition is innate to the human being and can be encouraged by the discipline of psychology in order to help it grow and bear fruit.

Adler's understanding of religious activity can provide support for the dynamic of faith. In Adler's understanding, God is not a being as Christians have traditionally understood the term. However, since this investigation takes a look at man's response to God's initiative, whether God is a being or some other posited goal, makes no difference for the purposes at hand. The dynamic of the faith response is the same whether it orientates itself to Yahweh or Buddha. Adler is working with a psychology of values which is a departure from the Freudian school. An Adlerian psychology of values is open to assist a believer in searching for the truth and an improved response to God's initiative. Pastoral theology recognizes this and aims to improve the health and wellbeing of an individual by working within his experience.

God is not a pre-existent being in Adlerian thought, (this notion has been inherited from Hellenic thinking), but rather a noble idea that has appeared in man's conscious expression of himself. It is a natural inclination to strive for perfection and positing a goal of God permits the process of striving to accomplish its work, the betterment of the individual.

One concretization of the idea of perfection, the highest image of greatness and superiority, which has always been very natural for man's thinking and feeling, is the contemplation of a deity. To strive towards God, to be in Him, to follow His call, to be one with Him - from this goal of striving (not of a drive), there follow attitude, thinking, and feeling.¹⁹

The question we might ask ourselves is that, does this form of faith relationship become invalidated because God is not traditionally conceived? The answer I suggest is no. The idea of God initiates a faith response on our part and can well serve the aims and purpose of a pastoral theology or psychology.

Within this framework of thinking one recognizes that faith is not an object to be grasped but rather an attitude expressing a relationship between the individual and his goal. For the Christian that goal will be God, the father of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For the non-believer that goal is the ideal of perfection. In both cases the dynamic of faith is the same. Faith is a state of mind which has great possibilities of growth and development within pastoral theology. The attitude of faith is not an additive to an individual. It is not acquired. This dimension of an individual's make-up is integral to his human nature - in fact it makes him human. As an individual grows physically, he also grows psychologically and spiritually. Whether he is a Christian or Buddhist, or a non-believer the individual grows and strives via an attitude of faith. Adler accepts this when he writes,

The strong possibilities of a concretization of a final goal of Perfection and the irresistible attraction to it are firmly anchored in the nature of man, in the structure of his psychological apparatus. So, too, are the possibilities of psychological joining with others. The sanctification of these possibilities

strengthened them in their development by setting the entire thinking and feeling apparatus into continuous movement.²⁰

I am suggesting that God or a guiding fiction is sufficient to set the faith dynamic in motion. I'll leave to speculative theology the task of determining any advantage of god over a guiding fiction. Some may recognize no fundamental difference, only an expression of preference on the part of an individual. However for my part, as a Christian believer, there is a dimension to faith's experience present to the believer that is absent in the non-believer. This realization comes from talking, working, counseling and being present to many individuals in a pastoral setting. Here is the watershed between pastoral counseling and for the lack of a better word, community counseling which lacks religious belief.

One needs to recognize that faith as a theological concept is ambiguous today in the experience and minds of many. Faith is not belief in our understanding in this work. Nor is faith considered in its traditional understanding as a "gift", and object given from outside the individual. This is not to deny faith as a gift but simply to restrict our consideration to the faith response as a growth dynamic in an individual. I am considering faith as an attitude, an expression of confidence in another that is natural to an individual. Leslie Dewart has written a critique of modern man's insistence of employing Hellenic thought concepts in articulating his religious experience. He expresses faith this way.

Faith is the existential response of the self to the openness of the transcendence disclosed by conscious experience. It is our decision to respect, to let be, the contingency of our being, and, therefore, to admit into our calculations a reality beyond the totality of being.²¹

This distinction is important for our purpose in psychology as we attempt to understand the virtue of faith. Faith has an affective dimension that belief does not. In other words faith brings about some change, movement or development in the individual. This is not likely so with respect to belief. One can believe a given datum without any affective result. A Christian who is faithful toward the person of Christ ought to be able to show

signs of being a Christian, i.e. being a forgiving individual, being compassionate and generous person.

In the Roman Liturgy the Profession of Faith (creed) occurs after the homily. The text of the Vatican Council Document on the Liturgy illustrates this dual understanding of faith, as a gift and as a response on an individual's part, is intrinsic to modern understanding. While not denying the objective perspectives of the statement, it accepts the subjective response of the individual.

The purpose of the Profession of Faith (or Creed) is to express the *assent* and *response* of the people to the scripture reading and homily they have just heard, and to recall to them the main truths of the faith, before they begin to celebrate the Eucharist [emphasis mine].²²

Christian theology accepts that God himself may be manifest to the believer through his word, scripture, and through preaching. Therefore, it is proper to speak of a faith attitude to the Word and preaching.

We must distinguish between authentic faith and inauthentic faith. How to distinguish between the two is a question of discernment and impinges on the notion of the health of the individual. There seems to be no certitude in determining the religious experience of faith in individuals given the wide variety of religious experience. However, individuals of authentic faith will recognize each other. Or considered another way an unhealthy individual will likely appear neurotic to the community. Given, as Adler postulates, the individual makes his meaning in life within a communal context, an individual striving towards a goal not in the social interest of the community, would be an unhealthy individual. Or, be a person of inauthentic faith, when considered from a theological perspective. The individual of inauthentic faith has recognized something less than social interest as his goal and strives for that. "In theological terms those with an inauthentic faith have confused something less than God with God."²³ In accepting the above orientation on thought it becomes increasingly difficult to articulate the classical view that faith is exclusively a divine gift, as if it were something added to an individual nature by a superior power. This has been the long held view of many theologians but not all theologians are in accord. Even

before modern psychology made inroads into theological thought certain thinkers challenged this view. F. R. Tennant writes, “Faith is an outcome of the inborn propensity to self-conservation and selfbetterment which is a part of human nature, and is no more a miraculously superadded endowment than is sensation or understanding.”

²⁴ However, the majority of Christian theologians and philosophers have held faith to be a divine gift. The philosopher, Peter Geach, sums up in my view the principles of classical thought underlying the necessity of faith. They are contained in these statements:

- there is corporate corruption, but not corporate salvation, of the human race.
- By nature, then, we tend to acquiesce in being the sort of flawed creatures that the Fall has made us.
- A true conception of God is to be got by believing authoritative testimony - that is the Judeo-Christian (and Muslim) view. ²⁵

‘Authoritative testimony’ is God-Given. That he may give to some and not to others, is part of the Christian theological heritage, which is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in the modern world. Only God’s gift of grace could possibly redeem mankind from this peril in classical Christian thought. This perspective needs reassessment. Opposite to Geach, who implies that authoritative testimony is found in the Judeo - Christian tradition is the view espoused by Charles Davis. His can be understood as a personal and pastoral response. In the section entitled, ‘Prospect for the Church’, he discusses this question and comes to an opposite conclusion. Christianity being an eschatological faith, he argues, cannot be wed to any particular culture, but indeed, transcends all cultural forms. The future end of Christianity is outside history hence cannot be finally encapsulated in any form - including the western cultural heritage it now employs. An authentic Christian stance must be recognized as transitory. The tension between the classical notion of faith and the contemporary expression is not a negative condition. Rather, it can be seen to be a product of development over the ages. Since the individual’s experience varies from culture to culture, and generation to

generation, it is reasonable that one's faith experience varies from generation to generation, culture to culture.

This is possible because the Christian faith is not wedded to any given cultural form, any more than it is to be found as a pure essence, devoid of concrete cultural form. As it can endure through history and transcend cultures, it can transcend concepts. Therefore, the traditional Christian faith can be cast not only in the traditional concepts but also in the novel, emergent concepts that an evolving human experience creates.²⁶

Here one can place the emphasis on the individual's response in the act of faith, rather than on God's initiative. This allows an excellent opportunity to introduce into our practice of the virtues the principles of Individual Psychology to assist our growth in the spiritual life.

In the light of Adler's principles applied to the practicing of the virtues of faith these notions may have to be abandoned by the modern individual if he is to live an authentic and healthy life. Rather than accept faith as a given datum in life. Faith must be recognized as a relationship arising out of our experience with one another, if it is to be a significant and meaningful event for modern man. There is a touch of irony here in Leslie Dewart's comment that clearly illustrates a contemporary working of the act of faith.

In the person of John XXIII the Catholic Church made an act of faith in the precisely opposite idea [to resist the factual reality, and to deny the moral validity, of the historical development of man's self-consciousness]: that the truth of Christianity needs for its health, protection and development the reality of man's individual and cultural growth in self-consciousness.²⁷

Individual Psychology will invite us to look to the individual and his behaviour, his goals and his life-style to discover any authentic living of the virtuous life. It is not as an addition to individual nature that faith has its effects but as an expression of the individual dynamic in community. The traditional notion of 'having faith' or 'not having faith' needs to be reconsidered. A subjective and affective view ought to be advanced and incorporated into our understanding. Then it is possible to accept a

synthesis in the individual between the philosophical and theological expressions of the notions of faith. Until this synthesis is accomplished, an individual is likely to engage in a struggle that may compel him to abandon the act of faith in order to remain, what he perceives to be a healthy individual, in the modern world. But this need not necessarily be the case. “Grace given from above and faith found within oneself are identical for the one who has them; yet they seem to be separate entities as long as we cannot reach them.”²⁸ ‘Faith found within oneself’ is crucial for Adlerian understanding. While not attempting to cancel the intent of classical thought Adler suggests that modern man needs to recognize within himself a dynamic that strives for the same object that man has held throughout time. Each individual possesses an innate creative power in his nature. “Every human being brings the disposition for social interest with him; but then it must be developed through upbringing, especially through correct guidance of the creative power of the individual.”²⁹ Faith for Adlerians is the affective attitude shown in the individual’s concern for a healthy social interest. This goal of a healthy social interest inspires faith and in turn affects the condition of others in striving for the same goal.

However, from a theological point of view Adler did express some thoughts that were disconcerting. He has contributed to a better understanding of religious activity through his psychological insights but at one point in his writings he did make a prediction that scientific illumination will eventually replace religious faith. Jahn is correct when he classes Adler as an influential humanist and not a Christian psychologist.

Religious faith is alive and will continue to live until it is replaced by this most profound insight and the religious feeling which stems from it. It will not be enough for man to taste of this insight; he will have to devour and digest it completely.³⁰

I accept that there is no malice here. Rather Adler has replaced traditional understanding with principles from his own thought. Christianity understands that it is faith that urges the individual towards Christian community, whereas, guidance for the individual will point the way of solving problems. We can recognize this striving to

accomplish the 'not yet' in social interest as inspiring Christian faith. In this case the Christian and the Individual Psychologist have the same purpose in mind. Now we must turn our attention to the virtue of hope and investigate its interconnectedness with faith thus leading us in turn to consider the virtue of charity.

Hope

Once again I will appeal to Geach for an understanding of the virtue of hope. He relates the classical position when asserting that hope is authentically Christian when orientated to its object, God, in the person of Christ. "I shall try to show that any other hope, for individuals or for the human race, is quite unfounded." he states.³¹ I take this perspective represented by Geach to reflect the typical attitude Christian philosophers and theologians have had over the ages concerning the religious dimension of man's life. I accept that Adler has presented us with the possibility of understanding our experiences in life, and in particular our religious experiences with a different set of tools, i.e. Individual Psychology. However, modern thought to the minds of some can be threatening. Indeed it can provoke statements of denial and contradiction. In a critique of scientific thinking, Geach writes;

Some people have seen this, and desperately look forward to a time when natural science will have progressed so far that we shall not need, in serious thinking, to talk of people's word's, opinions, plans and intentions, but only of physical and physiological states and events!³²

This manner of thinking would seem to be set against Adler's thought with respect to the religious experience in life. However, there is a point of agreement to be noted. It can be said that both Geach and Adler in their respective schools of thought see hope as eschatologically determined. Both see life as being understood as what we shall be in the future. Both understand the ideal of the future in the individual. As I understand them, both could assent to the following. "There is a consensus that God is a work in time, bearing with his world, and going before it, making present life intelligible, and filling with hope our present work, suffering, and dying through the future which he holds before us."³³

The only point of clarification needed is that for Adler God is to be understood as the goal of social interest. This future orientation of hope is what joins the philosopher and the psychologist in an individual attempting to articulate the virtue of hope. Eschatological understanding is at the basis of hope. Hope is exercised in the light of its

future goal. The promises hidden in the future inspire in the present and orientate us to social interest.

According to a theology of hope articulated by Moltmann, hope does not attempt to construct an ideal picture of future events or conditions. Rather hope is a dynamic activity that leads the individual to understand the existing situation and lead him to effect some sort of transformation in his religious life. From an Adlerian perspective hope leads the individual to seek improvements in the ideal of social interest through his striving for the future. Adler understood the virtue of hope as something found in the idea of human progress. Something innate in the individual prompts striving for the future, for the good of the individual as well as, ultimately, the collective. His assumption about this positive thrust is recognized by theologians as the virtue of hope.

Hope is

social interest for Adler.

But social interest is continually pressing and growing. For this reason, no matter how dark the times may be, in the long-range view there is the assurance of the higher development of the individual and the group. Social interest is continually growing; human progress is a function of the higher development of social interest; therefore, human progress will be inevitable as long as mankind exists.³⁴

This effect of hope is echoed by Charles Davis. Hope is not something we do without now, waiting for a future realization, but rather hope has its concrete effects in the present living moment. Davis devotes an entire chapter in his book to the subject of the Church and Hope. His conclusion of hope realized is that one obtains the life of Christ now. Like him, we prevail over every contrary force, including death. From an Adlerian perspective this trusting assurance leads us to seek a greater participation in social interest as it is recognized to be a form of hope fulfilled. Theologically, our hope is rewarded. Brink suggests that Adler, linked hope and social interest so closely that, “According to Adler, once the faith in the future is gone, it becomes very difficult to maintain social interest and to obtain successful compensation.”³⁵ What we hope for comes to pass in time, but in the present it is an unrealized expectation. Those who live

in hope, encourage each other, strengthen each other and affirm each other in life against hardships and seeming meaningfulness. The individual and community live in the expectation that their hopes will be realized. “Claims of interest in the well-being of the community, however, have power in the long run only if their professed accord with the general well-being finds confirmation.”³⁶

From an Adlerian perspective hope leads the individual to seek improvement in the ideal of social interest through his striving for the future. For the Christian there is a tension between the present and the future. This tension is the lived reality where experience and hope do not yet coincide. This accords with St. Paul’s teaching in Roman’s 8:24ff. Hope is future directed and its object is not yet accomplished. Otherwise, there would be no point in hoping. “For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience,” as St. Paul expressed it. This is an important consideration in life. It is incumbent on the Christian to live ‘as if’ the future is realized in the present. This notion of ‘as if’ is significant in practicing Individual Psychology. This notion comes into prominence with Hans Vaihinger who presented the notion to the public in a work entitled, *The Philosophy of As If* in 1911. Adler suggests exactly the same notion by his use of a psychological fiction. The fiction becomes a guiding principle for the individual. A guiding fiction is Adler’s way of showing how an individual comprehends his own striving for the future. It is the device or manner by which the individual seeks to release himself from a present moment of pain or inferiority. For Adler, the guiding fiction which the individual creates, need not necessarily conform to reality. In the Christian the role of the guiding fiction is assumed by his belief in God. This is another example where the dynamic of the virtue of hope, like faith, operates in the believer and non-believer alike. “In order for the guiding fiction to be effective within its role, it is not necessary that its truth claims be valid.”³⁷ Hope brings about a cure. It establishes a healthy life-style. What the biblical miracles record about change in the individual could be cast in Adlerian terms. At least this is the notion of Brink.

“By accepting a new guiding fiction, these individuals were released from neurotic life-styles which had manifested themselves in terms of physical maladies.”³⁸

Adler will develop the notion that an individual needs to base his action on a fictional psychological order of his own creation. For this he must use the power innate in him as a member of the community. Having established this fictional base the individual will then act, “as if this world were real, true and good for all time.”³⁹ There is an element of risk in life and the dynamic relationship of the individual in community cannot side-step this experience. Hope, psychologically speaking, offers no philosophical certainty but offers venture. He who lives in hope confidently lives as if he knows and is not subject to the criticism of credulity. It is to be recognized that this hope in the logical order and hope subsequently builds on faith. It is not unreasonable therefore to see that hope provides a type of assurance for the individual in his religious understanding of life. This understanding is compatible with Adlerian Psychology. Faith expressed in the individual’s desire to increase healthy social interest leads to modern man being able to understand and work with the dynamic of hope. A theology or life-style that fails to recognize this is not sufficient for modern man. As one author observed: “But if, on the other hand, a Christian theology functions to provide a sense of the direction of life, of its meaning and purpose (not a privileged solace or special knowledge of any sort) then, (I believe) a theology of hope will prove adequate for Christian needs.”⁴⁰

Individual Psychology can provide an orientation that will give adequate meaning to an individual in his life-style so that the virtue of hope can be fully and healthily practiced. Adlerian psychology will see human development as future orientated and hence by nature an individual can be considered a creature of hope. The psychological movement of the individual aims at the goal of perfection.

Adlerians see the individual who hopes as a product of evolution. At this point this view and that of classical theology come into conflict. While Individual psychology is correct in the affective assessment of the hoping individual, it may not be correct in considering the virtue as solely a product of evolution. The Christian will understand the virtue of hope as predicated of the believer. However, this is not the perspective of an Adlerian psychologist. He sees the dynamic of hope arising out of the new human condition.

It has taken unthinkably long time and it has required a large number of tentative attempts for us to recognize a satisfactory image, to experience the revelation of a supreme being who would lead one to the hope and belief of security for the species and the individual.⁴¹

Adler's understanding of Individual Psychology differs in description from classical theology when it comes to expression of the notion of hope but does not differ in intent. He understands that the ideal of social feeling is not made concrete in this life but is rather a goal to be striven after. In its final form this goal posited by humanity at large inspires hope and those who direct their behaviour to attaining this goal are rightly adjusted. Hope then belongs to the health of the individual and the individual living and acting in despair could be considered as displaying neurotic behaviour. Hope gives meaning and purpose to life that prevents an unhealthy attitude from dominating the individual. Two authors accept the usefulness of Adler's psychology as healthful. "The healthy practitioner finds his religion uplifting and motivating as far as the demands of action and work are concerned. The neurotic becomes hypnotized by a fictional life-plan."⁴² In regard to the present activity,

Adler consistently emphasized that mental health lies in responding appropriately to the task set before the individual and any given time...Kung emphasized Jesus' insistence on caring For one's neighbour, who is 'anyone who needs me here and now'⁴³

Lack of interest in the social conditions, selfcenteredness and isolation would all be earmarks of the despairing or neurotic person.

By his principles and his insistence on seeing the individual in a communal setting Adler gives us tools to recognize a contemporary Christian dimension to modern behaviour. Life's experience in the present can be interpreted as preparing the individual and the community for some future event. Adler's own understanding parallels very closely the Christian virtue of hope.

This social feeling exists within us and endeavours to carry out its purpose; it does not seem strong enough to hold its own against all opposing forces. The justified expectation persists that in a far-off age, if mankind is given

enough time, the power of social feeling will triumph over all that opposes it.⁴⁴

Having discussed faith and hope as virtues in the context of Adlerian psychology it remains to treat the virtue of charity to complete the trinity.

Charity

I will take, once more, Geach as a typical representative thinker in classical theological matters. He does express the traditional view that only certain characteristics can be predicated of both God and man alike - albeit to a varying degree. Not all virtues can be ascribed to God. That is, God cannot be thought of as being faithful or being hopeful as regards the future. This would imply a privation or deficiency on the part of God. This is not the case, however, with the virtue of charity. Justice and prudence which can be predicated of God depend on a world which is prudently planned and justly governed, "whereas charity or love is just what God eternally is, independently of any world made or to be made."⁴⁵

In developing Adler's perspective here we need remember that he understood charity not as self-sacrifice but a development of one's abilities for his own good and the good of others in community. Or put another way, charity means the striving to realize the ideal of social interest is healthy. A refusal to show interest here would not only be uncharitable according to Individual Psychology but neurotic as well.

When we speak of virtue we mean that a person plays his part; when we speak of vice we mean that he interferes with co-operation. I can, moreover, point out that all that constitutes a failure is so because it obstructs social feeling, whether children, neurotics, criminals, or suicides are in question.⁴⁶

A concept that Adler struggled with and in fact comes to reject is that love is not an extension to others of one's natural self-concern. For him love is just that concern. In a description of the concept of charity found in St. John's gospel, Moffat writes a paragraph with which Adler himself would have little quarrel.

What he [John] generally means by the term is not a definite relation towards men and women so much as the sublimated sense of being part of the human whole; it denotes for him man's general duty as a member of the race, an emotion and an idea due to the common humanity of man, as though to be humane and kind was the duty of a human creature as such.⁴⁷

Adler will place himself outside the philosophical understanding of the virtue of charity as expressed by Geach. While agreeing with the intent of the following statement, Adler in his Individual Psychology approach would of necessity have to disagree with the vocabulary used to express that intent.

Christian charity has to be love of people individually, not just general good will. So let us foster such individual loves as we can and avoid hatred and malice; in Glory there will be all eternity to know and love those who will be our friends for ever because both we and they were God's friends first.⁴⁸

Logically, God does not precede social interest for Adler. Rather, God as an entity who has loved us first would be rejected in Individual Psychology. Adler would teach that the innate notion of social interest impels man to posit God as a goal. Charity and love arise out of the individual's striving to meet that goal. But this goal is the ideal community, not the existing one. The community in the concrete is not sufficiently developed yet to provide the best of conditions for the individual. But the future one can - where charity and social interest prevail, that is. This accords with Jesus teaching and example. In one sense, Jesus focused his teaching in the here and now. Or at least, the early community recorded his teaching as such, given the accounts of scripture. Moffat acknowledges this when he writes,

The hope of the kingdom was that such inward relationships to God would then become the law of human life; but, while Jesus was no mere futurist, he lived under the apocalyptic hope in such a way as to believe in the urgency of the new law for those who were the nucleus of the new order.⁴⁹

Individual Psychology can illustrate and illumine one's understanding beyond the above expression. Adler's approach is able to be acknowledged as preferable in articulation of the philosophical expression of the virtue of charity. Christian charity intends to invite the followers of Jesus to forgive others. The intent here is not just to correct the disciple and have him abandon his evil ways and avoid doing harm to himself and others. This to me seems entirely compatible with Adler's notion of the individual striving for social interest. For him it is essential for good health that the

individual adapt his behaviour to the good of the community. What is good for the individual is good for the community from the perspective of Individual Psychology.

Our intention in acting charitably is to solve the problems of life. In solving the problems of others we will solve our own problems too. Religion has tried to do this. But in fact often failed in attempting to do the best it could. Surely the commands, 'thou shalt not kill' and 'Love thy neighbour', can hardly ever disappear from knowledge and feeling as the supreme court of appeal. These and other norms of human social life, which are undoubtedly the products of evolution and are as native to humanity as breathing and the upright gait, can be embodied in the conception of an ideal human community, regarded here as the impulse and the goal of evolution.⁵⁰

Living charity requires that an individual involve himself with the community and the environment. Social feeling was meant to bring individuals together for the good of all concerned Adler often reminds us. An attitude that militates against this view would be uncharitable.

Individual Psychology has uncovered the fact that the deviations and failures of the human character - neurosis, psychosis, crime, drug addiction etc. - are nothing but forms of expression and symptoms of the striving for superiority directed against fellowmanship, which presents itself in one case as striving for power, in another case as an evasion of accomplishments by which another might benefit.⁵¹

He will discuss it under another heading, 'From Hierarchical Orders to Free Organization', but Charles Davis is concerned with the subject of community. A healthy community is a liberating community and his reaction to experiences within the Roman Catholic Communion were not healthy. He comes to the same conclusion as Adler in positing that human social life ought to be organized to promote unity and fellowship. Out of this will arise a common world of meaning and charity will be truly exercised. Adler will insist that social interest be developed from birth. The Christian can insist that charity be developed from birth within the context of Christian

community. This notion of religious life and health in reciprocal relationship is not unknown before Adler. D.L. Weatherhead, to my view, has captured in his statement what Adler was attempting to understand in individual Psychology.

We defined health, earlier in this book, as the harmonious relationship between every part of the self and Environment. Granted that man is a body, mind and spirit, his complete health necessitates a harmonious relationship between his spirit and its environment which we call God.⁵²

Significantly he equates God and environment (Adler will call it Social Interest) and envisions the dynamic relationship between the two as healthy. To avoid the criticism of pantheism it must be remembered that we are thinking in psychological terms not employing traditional philosophical notions. However, he correctly does not envision charity as exclusively a Christian virtue. Speaking of charity and brotherly love he says, “But these affections are certainly not mere derivatives of theism. We find them in Stoicism, in Hinduism, and in Buddhism in the highest possible degree. They harmonize with paternal theism beautifully....”⁵³

CONCLUSION

This thesis began by reflecting on the fact of experience in modern man's life. It was acknowledged that traditional ways of thinking about mankind and the world about him have become less and less satisfactory. Philosophical thinking is being replaced by psychological thought. This has its effects upon theological reflection. An investigation of the relationship between culture and belief illustrated that Newtonian and derivative views of thinking are being replaced by concepts more dialectical and less fixed than traditional philosophical concepts. Within psychology this has led to an intellectual approach that has had subsequent impact upon our theological concepts. Pastoral psychology has taken an interest in this recent way of thinking and I have attempted to contribute to that body of thought by considering the virtues of faith, hope and charity in the light of Adlerian principles. The suitability of Adler's system has been demonstrated, I believe, with respect to enhancing the Christian life. On a practical pastoral level much may be done, with positive results, to promote Adlerian principles in ministry.

Faith, today, can be understood as a commitment arising out of our innate disposition to social interest. Faith traditionally has been considered to have "moved mountains" but today we can see its creative power released in the healthy individual living in community. Hope finds its realization today, not in some future idealized world, but in the present moment in the development of a higher social interest on the part of the individual. And charity, being a virtue, augments co-operation among individuals living in community. Given this context, I believe the perspective presented in this investigation is in keeping with orthodox Christianity and can be recommended pastorally to ministers and counselors.

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